

**Speech at the Australian Unity's  
Australia Day Breakfast**  
26/01/2005

Thank you, Allan.

Distinguished guests, ladies and Gentlemen, may I first say that how delighted I am to be here with you this morning.

I feel truly honoured to be asked as your speaker on this historical day. This is a day to celebrate our forebears' vision and legacy, a day to celebrate the Australian achievements and the Australian spirit. It's a day of rejoicing the fortunate life we lead and the need to help the less fortunate people in the world. After all, it's our forbears who created the Building and Friendly Societies for the benefit of all Australians. And Australian Unity is the amalgamation of two old Friendly Societies: the Australian Native Association and Manchester United Independent Order of Oddfellows. It's their aim to promote moral, social, intellectual improvements and mutual self-help. No doubt their vision and generous spirit of 150 years ago, had made important contributions to a more equitable, a more tolerate, a more compassionate and more liveable Australia we enjoy today.

Indeed, I was a recipient from other people's incredible generous gifts which changed the entire course of my life. These inspirational people reached out to me, inspired and motivated me, and lent me helping hands. Their generous spirits had created the so-called **butterfly effects** in my life, which allowed me chances and opportunities to go on achieving a memorable and rewarding life.

For me to stand here today, as one of the former top dancers in the world, an international best selling author and now a relatively successful stockbroker, I have to travel on roads less travelled by others, experienced both hard-ship and blessed moments in life. Not only had I to rely on vision, passion, determination and perseverance to successfully overcome some impossible obstacles throughout my journey, I also needed hope, courage and big dreams. Truly, my destiny was meant to be a poverty-stricken peasant from the day I was born for as long as I lived, just like my father before me and my forefathers before him...

- **Poverty-stricken childhood**, no food, mealtime, eating tree barks.
- **Frog in the Well story,**
- **"When the heart weeps for what it has lost, the spirit laughs for what it has found."**
- **Audition: torn hamstrings**
- **Left home at 11, seven years of harsh and disciplined training at the Beijing Dance Academy**
- **The inspirational teacher, Teacher Hsiao.**

- **Found my passion in ballet. Hopping stairs and turning under candle light**
- **1979, meeting Ben Stevenson and going to the USA**
- **No English, “Yes & No” “Oh Dear Me”**
- **Defection.**
- **Freedom and treasured the opportunities in life.** Went on to become one of the best dancers in the world. Winning **silver medals...**
- **Mary's sacrifice for Sophie. Her dedication; love; passion**
- **About the journey of writing my book.**

### **Finishing Remarks:**

To finish, I would just like to say that when I reflect upon my journey, I could still taste that extreme and hopelessness of the poor life in the early years of my life, the lack of opportunities, the starvation, the desperation I experienced as that little frog at the bottom of the deep well with no way out. And then along came some courageous and inspirational people whom gave me some incredibly rare chances in life, some of those chances, were simply hang by the thinnest of thread and they had changed the entire course of my life beyond description. Those experiences gave me a humble prospective of life and provided me with strong and clear goals in life. One of them is to lend others in the world (including the rest of my family) who still live in deep wells, a helping hand.

As we live in our lucky society and appreciate what our forefathers have left us, we should ask ourselves that how do we want to be remembered by future generations and what kind of legacy do we want to leave behind? I truly believe, in our own ways, we can all contribute to make our world a kinder and better place to live. If we can bring inspiration and hope into the lives of others, if we can show each other with decency and compassion, if we can measure our life's success as how many people we have helped by creating opportunities for them and how many frogs we have assisted of getting out of their deep wells, then we can truly say that we have made meaningful contributions to our world and possibly an even better place to live than our forefathers left us.

Thank you!